

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the indication that Claims 2-9, 13-19, 21 and 22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. It is noted, however, that Claim 13 is, in fact, an independent claim. As such, Applicants submit that independent Claim 13, as well as Claims 14-19 which depend therefrom, should not be objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but should, instead, be allowed. The remaining claims, that is, Claims 1, 10-12, 20, 23 and 24, are rejected as set forth below.

In this regard, Claims 1, 12 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,722,202 to James C. Kennedy, et al. Independent Claims 1 and 20 have now been amended to include the recitations of allowable, dependent Claims 2 and 21, respectively. It is therefore submitted that amended independent Claims 1 and 20 are patentable for at least the same reasons that dependent Claims 2 and 21 were previously found to define patentable subject matter such that the rejection of independent Claims 1 and 20, as well as dependent Claim 12, is therefore overcome. As a result of the amendments to independent Claims 1 and 20, dependent Claims 2 and 21 have been canceled and the dependency of dependent Claims 3, 5 and 22 has been correspondingly amended.

Claims 10, 11, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the Kennedy '202 patent, either alone with respect to Claim 11, in combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,010,636 to Jack P. Clark, et al. with respect to Claim 10 and in combination with U.S. Patent No. 5,343,750 to Manohar Bashyam with respect to Claims 23 and 24. It is hereby noted that the Kennedy '202 patent and the present application were owned by the same entity, that is, The Boeing Company, at the time that the claimed invention of the present application was made. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(c), the Kennedy '202 patent can therefore not be properly utilized as a prior art reference in conjunction with an obviousness rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 such that the rejections of Claims 10, 11, 23 and 24 are overcome. As such, each of these claims have also been written in independent form to include the recitations of either independent Claim 1 (with respect to Claims 10, 11 and 23) or independent Claim 20 (with respect to Claim 24).

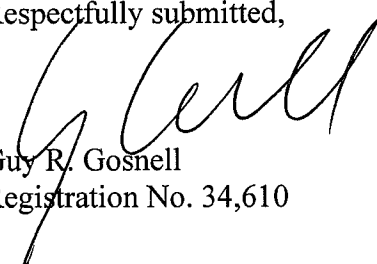
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims of the present application are in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. Examiner Chapman is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



Guy R. Gosnell
Registration No. 34,610

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

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